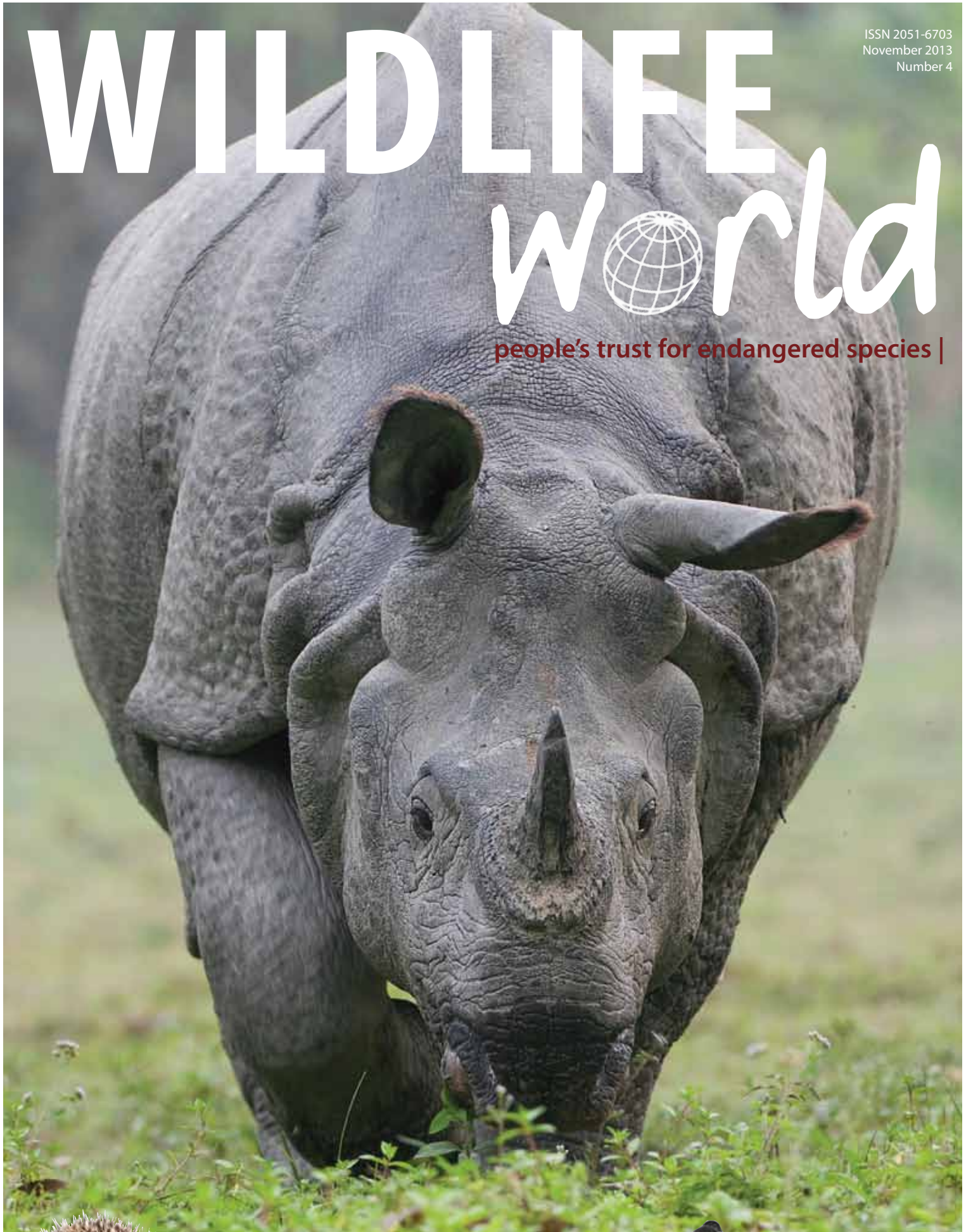


WILDLIFE

world

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people's trust for endangered species |



LIVING ROOM

How much space does a hedgehog population need?

SAVING CATS & DOGS

Latest news from some of our large carnivore projects



NUMBER GAMES

How to count wildlife – tips from an expert



It's not in my nature to be a pessimist – which is part of the reason I appreciate the 'can-do' attitude of PTES – as an organisation it puts its weight behind people whose expertise, passion and hard work really can make a difference. But this has been a difficult year for conservationists in Britain, and for much of the time achieving the necessary support for wildlife has felt even more of an uphill struggle than usual. Certainly the political wind is against us. But the thing about wind is that it changes. Like seasoned sailors, we have to be ready and willing to make maximum headway when we can. This might mean taking a longer route. Sometimes it means just fighting to hold a position and not be swept disastrously off course by forces beyond our control. Giving up isn't an option.

Mariners have learned that when it comes to navigating tricky waters, tried and tested technology is infinitely better than instinct. And in conservation, it's the same. We must have a clear idea of our destination, and rely on scientific research to inform our decisions on how to get there. Science, like careful route-finding, takes time,

and while it's tempting to just hold a finger to the wind and go, our mission is too important and the risk of casualties is too high.

We feature PTES supporters in various sections of the magazine – if ever there was a reason for optimism, it's seeing the pictures and reading the reports you send in of fundraisers, awareness events, class projects and magical wildlife encounters. Word of mouth is powerful, and wildlife needs advocates in all walks of life and in every home, every city park and farming community, every classroom and boardroom, every pub and coffee shop, every social networking site and every corridor of power. You don't have to be an expert in all of it, just find out what you can about an issue that concerns you – the following pages are a great place to start – and then, please, go and share it.

Dr Amy-Jane Beer
Editor *Wildlife World*



Laurie Campbell



In this edition ...

4 Your PTES Our staff and supporters love getting close to wildlife, as the pictures we receive show. Why not send us yours?

5 Frontline We all know wildlife needs space – but how much exactly? For hedgehogs at least, we're closer to an answer.

6-9 NEWS

Updates from home and overseas, including upward trends for pine martens, worrying figures for grey long-eared bats, exciting news about snow leopards, and a word from our CEO Jill Nelson.

10-11 Scrapbook News, comment, pictures and updates from PTES-funded researchers and supporters.

12-15 MAIN FEATURE

The magic of Manas

Most people have never heard of India's remote Manas valley, despite its World Heritage status. PTES is helping **Pranjal Bezbarua** put Manas on the map as a haven for wildlife, including endangered rhinos.

16-21 PTES IN ACTION

16-17 Saving big cats and wild dogs

Updates from a selection of our carnivore campaign projects, helping lions, cheetahs and wild dogs in Africa and snow leopards and dholes in Asia.

18 Loris love and pride Community support for slow loris conservation in Java has never been higher, thanks to work funded by PTES.

18 Following the bear The Syrian subspecies of brown bear is in decline, making research on its ecology increasingly urgent.

19 Feeling eels and catching crabs Testing size-selective fyke nets is chilly, slimy work. It's lucky PTES interns are made of stern stuff.

20 The buzzy beast of Dartmoor As elusive as the Beast of Bodmin, the bog hoverfly needs friends like PTES and Buglife, the Invertebrate Conservation Trust.

20 A welcome find in the Forest Another triumph for citizen science – our appeal for noble chafer sightings scored a hit thanks to a sharp-eyed New Forest resident.

21 Rocky gets a second chance Life in the wild can be tough for young orangutans – but life in captivity is worse. Our project in Aceh is offering hope for the great red ape.

21 Protecting India's great gibbon hangout News of another PTES funded primate project investigating the ecology of the western hoolock gibbon in India.

10-11 DIY... Counting wildlife Numbers matter when it comes to wildlife populations. So we asked ecologist Colin Hawes for some tips on how to count what you see on your patch.

CORRECTION: On page 10 of the last edition of *Wildlife World* we captioned an image as the medicine tree *Prunus africana*. In fact the picture showed another shrub, *Casia sp.*

Make this magazine work harder...

When you've finished with this copy of *Wildlife World*, please pass it on to someone else or donate it to a waiting room collection – you might find us a new supporter! If you've picked up this magazine and enjoyed reading about the projects that PTES funds you can support us for just £3 a month and receive two issues of *Wildlife World* every year. Please contact us at the address below for details.

people's trust for
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Editorial team: Jill Nelson, Zoe Roden
Nida Al Fulajj
Design: Amy-Jane Beer, Wildstory
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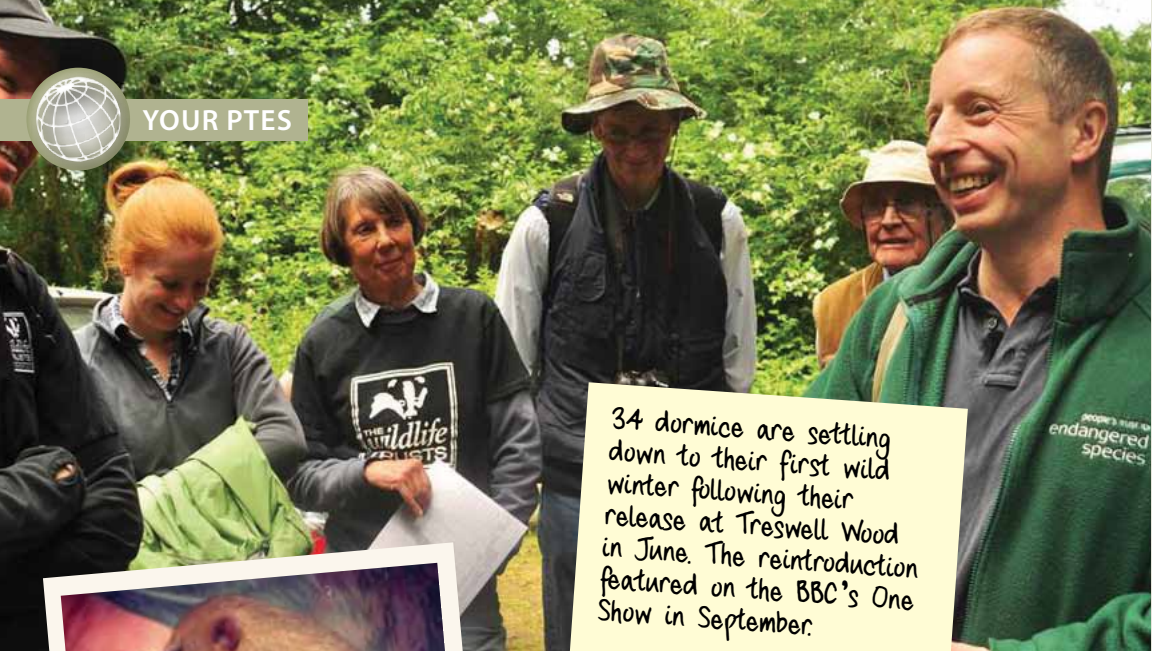
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Contact us:
PTES *Wildlife World* Magazine
15 Cloisters House
8 Battersea Park Road
London SW8 4BG
TEL: 020 7498 4533
www.ptes.org
wildlifeworld@ptes.org



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34 dormice are settling down to their first wild winter following their release at Treswell Wood in June. The reintroduction featured on the BBC's One Show in September.

Meanwhile, dormouse monitoring continued at our Briddlesford reserve where some of you joined in through our Wildlife Encounters programme. 'Getting close to such beautiful animals was an experience we'll treasure for a long time to come' said event supporters Paul & Karen.

Lorna Griffiths



Zoe Hoden

Emily, Susan & Katherine took the PTES and Hedgehog Street show on the road this summer, visiting events including Bristol Festival of Nature and BirdFair at Rutland Water.



PTES

We enjoyed a day out of the office picking apples in our orchard at Rough Hill. Hard work for some... enjoying your tea Henry?



PTES



PTES

Grrrrr... our Saving Big Cats and Wild Dogs campaign has some fierce supporters!



For details of Wildlife Encounters, surveys and other PTES activities, visit www.ptes.org or scan the code and discover how you can join in.

PTES likes ...

The River Singers
by Tom Moorhouse
£10.99



Ecologist and PTES research fundee Tom Moorhouse has turned his love of water voles into a novel. Aimed at children 8 years old and up, the story is a must for bedtime in wildlife friendly households this winter.

52 Wildlife Weekends: a year of British wildlife watching breaks
by James Lowen Brant, £14.99



A timely guide for anyone planning to see more wildlife in 2014 – practical advice on how to experience the best of wild Britain in a packed series of two-day excursions.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING?

Remember to visit our shop at www.ptes.org/shop for a range of thoughtful wildlife gifts that help conserve the species you care about.

Embodying ethics: Endangered
by Rohan Chhabra



There's more to designer Rohan Chhabra's range of hunting jackets than meets the eye. Each one transforms into a representation of a critically endangered species. This thought-provoking project has won acclaim for its craftsmanship and its relevant and responsive nature. Rohan's work is being exhibited at the 2013 London Design Festival and will be touring soon. Or see it at www.rohan-chhabra.com



AT THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM, ONE-HORNED RHINOS IN ASSAM FACED SEEMINGLY INSURMOUNTABLE ODDS. BUT CONSERVATIONISTS MUST BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE. GUNS CAN BE REPLACED WITH LOOMS, POACHERS CAN BECOME PROTECTORS AND MIRACLES CAN HAPPEN. **PRANJAL BEZBARUA** CALLS IT THE

Magic *of Manas*



Dr Pranjal Bezbarua is an ecologist at Gauhati University and Secretary of the conservation NGO Grasshopper, based in Assam.





MANAS! The word has long had mystic connotations for me. This great tributary of the Bramaputra, which marks the remote Indo-Bhutan border for some of its length, flows from blue hills through green forest. But despite recognition of the region's unique beauty and immense ecological value, and several layers of statutory protection, this magical landscape is also a troubled one. Political unrest began in the late eighties with demands from the local Bodo people for more autonomy. Forest mafias took the opportunity to destroy infrastructure and the unrest has taken a terrible toll on wildlife including rhinos, elephants and tigers. In

'One species was notably absent. Not once in those early years did I see a single sign of rhino.'

1992 UNESCO was compelled to list the area as a world heritage site in danger.

When my chance came to explore Manas tiger reserve in December 1999, I was excited; but my guide and mentor, Prof. C. K Baruah of Gauhati University was worried, as were my parents and friends including officials at the Ministry of Environment and Forests for the Government of India. The political crisis was ongoing, and Manas was used as a corridor by a variety of insurgent groups. Even so, beginning fieldwork felt like a childhood dream come true, and I fell increasingly under the spell of this wild, beautiful place and its people. I learned a great deal about the area, its biodiversity and the complex socioeconomic and political situation from local teachers, students, villagers and forest staff. And the stories they can tell of Manas and its wildlife! One day I met a forester honoured with a President Medal for fighting off a tiger to save his colleague. I soon put my faith in these

brave people, and felt safe as I spent days and nights walking through thick grassland and forests encountering wild buffaloes, elephants, bisons, hog deer, golden langurs and even a royal Bengal tiger. But one species was notably absent. Not once in those early years did I see a single sign of rhino.

Historically, the greater Indian one-horned rhinoceros existed across the entire *terai* – the zone of marshy grassland and forest extending south of the Himalayas from Pakistan across parts of Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan to the Indian-Burmese border. But the species has been in steady decline since

the 1600s and, by the beginning of the 21st century it teetered on the brink of extinction thanks to continued poaching and habitat shrinkage. Rhinos had disappeared from most of their former range states and were hanging on in just a few localities in Nepal and India. In 2005, about 80% of the total world population of around 2000 animals were thought to live in protected areas of Assam.

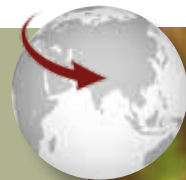
Hard times

During my fieldwork, I saw first-hand the pathetic condition of villagers as they collected fuel wood, foraged for vegetables or fished in the Manas. It was little wonder some of them turned to illegal logging and poaching to keep their families. The forest mafias exploited these people, taking advantage of inadequate law enforcement. Most shocking to me was to see young children following the example of their parents and killing small wildlife such as birds, bats or small animals. The lack of educational infrastructure helped steer them towards poaching or other illegal or anti-social activities.

Before the insurgency began, the total rhino population of Manas hovered at around 100 but, by the turn of the century, everybody believed they had been wiped out. Other sanctuaries, including those at Laokhowa and Burachapori and the Kurua protected forest had also lost their rhinos. But in February 2001, we received a call saying that a rhino had been poached at Kokilabari, on the eastern boundary of the Manas National Park. When forest

FACT FILE: Manas, Assam

Protected areas: Manas Tiger Reserve 2837 km²; Manas National Park 500 km²; Manas World Heritage Site 391 km²
Reasons for protection: Biodiversity hotspot, exceptional natural beauty
Special species: One-horned rhino, golden langur, Asiatic elephant, royal Bengal tiger, pygmy hog
Threats (historic and current): Poaching, insurgency, illegal logging and forest exploitation, human encroachment



Siddhartha Gogoi; Paul Sterry/NPL

BUILDING A MIRACLE

Prenjal Bezbarua/Grassopper

1. Persuade poachers to surrender their weapons



2. Train forest dependants in new skills, such as weaving

3. Inspire the conservationists of the future



staff visited the location, they found only bloodstains and skin – the meat had been taken by villagers after poachers had killed the animal and removed its horn. Whilst shocking, this incident did give us hope that a few rhino might exist in the nearby Bhutan hills. On a previous visit to Kokilabari, we had found it severely disturbed and had expected the remaining habitat to be lost altogether to human settlement. So finding even a dead rhino here was cause for hope, and local action began to be taken.

In 2004, Abhijit Rabha the field director of the national park accompanied me on a rare and risky trip through Manas, following the Indo-Bhutan border from west to east. We wanted to see if we could find any sign

Siddhartha Gogoi

of rhinos. After a 14-hour journey by elephant, and some nervous encounters with forest mafia, we reached Kokilabari where a new community-based NGO greeted us. The NGO was helping turn poachers into conservationists. Abhijit Rabha was even able to report a glimpse of a sub-adult rhino on the Indo-Bhutan border during that trip. These encouraging signs and the direct participation of the community in conservation were inspiring, and enough to convince the Forest Department of Assam that rhinos had a future in Manas. Thus a plan was hatched to save the last population of the Indo-Bhutan valley by reintroducing animals from elsewhere.

But where could the rhinos come

from? Actually, this was easy. While most sanctuaries had lost their rhinos during the political turmoil of 1980-2001, two reserves had beaten the odds and maintained flourishing populations. The rhinos at Kaziranga National Park in central Assam have been closely protected since 1905, and the population there had grown from a few dozen to more than 1900. In 2001, Kaziranga was home to 93% of the remaining Assam rhino population. This represented an extreme stochastic risk – which is to say far too many precious eggs were in one basket. Our second source was the tiny Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary, south of Manas, whose population far exceeded the natural carrying capacity of the land.

In 2005 we began a carefully designed rhino reintroduction and conservation programme involving the Forest Department, state and federal governments and several regional, national and international NGOs and institutes. The aim was to increase the overall rhino population of Assam from 2000 to 3000 and to expand the species' distribution from three to six protected areas by 2020. At Manas we were given the task of finding suitable habitat and establishing a long-term rhino-friendly environment before any rhinos arrived.

We began working with the communities, winning trust and helping people make the first steps towards rejecting poaching and embracing conservation. By engaging with former poachers I had come to understand some of the problems faced by forest dependants and I knew how easy it was for surrendered poachers to slip back into their old ways due to poverty and lack of alternative livelihood options.





4. Identify suitable rhino habitat

5. Reintroduce and monitor rhinos



6. Restore more grassland habitat

7. Strengthen community fencing & anti-poaching measures



We wanted to offer them new skills that would help them live a decent life and allow their children to go to school. We had very limited resources to achieve all this, so we were delighted when PTES came forward to help.

PTES helped fund our local NGO, Grasshopper, which engaged the community in conservation through awareness campaigning and rehabilitation of ex-poachers and forest dependants. Small things made a big difference. The distribution of 20 schoolbags amongst the children of forest dependants and a community literary event really helped spread the word about the need to educate children and the value of nature. For 20 families of poachers and forest dependants we offered training in pig-farming, horticulture and weaving. We were able to document a gradual change in behaviour and a 30-40% increase in economic activity. We arranged awareness campaigns in fringe villages around Manas and more community-based NGOs were formed to persuade poachers and forest dependants there of the importance of conservation.

The rhinos return

Meanwhile, also with funding from PTES, we had been able to identify likely looking areas for releasing translocated rhinos using satellite images and ground surveys. In 2006, the Forest Department of Assam undertook a trial reintroduction of a hand-reared rhino calf from Kaziranga to a fenced grassland in Manas. This youngster was joined by a further two calves the following year. In 2008, the forest

authority of Assam introduced two wild rhinos from Pabitora to Manas. Volunteers joined forest staff in offering protection to the new arrivals and more poachers surrendered and joined in with conservation activities.

Thus the first phase of the work was accomplished. It took strong community support and advanced technology, but the results were there to be seen – restored habitat and rhinos back where they belonged. PTES arranged two *Wildlife Encounter* trips to see the progress we had made, and these visits helped us to promote further eco-tourism and raise funds to support 80 more volunteers.

By 2011, there were 22 translocated rhinos in Manas and UNESCO removed the danger tag they had placed on the world heritage site. Today the total is 26, and five new calves have been born in the reserve in the last two years.

The way ahead

Much remains to be done. The five rhino births have been matched by losses to poaching since 2011. Poaching is on the increase globally, and traders use increasingly sophisticated techniques to hide their crimes. Insurgent organisations are often involved. Furthermore, we have found that our translocated rhinos sometimes stray beyond protected areas. We have therefore identified a buffer area around Manas in which we are strengthening security. The next phase of our work, also funded by PTES, is to evaluate the

level of threat using rapid socioeconomic surveys, and to implement community conservation activities, habitat restoration projects and other practical steps to safeguard the rhino population. We have supplied eco-friendly anti-poaching equipment such as solar torches and lamps to help ground forest staff with night patrols. We are mapping rhino straying patterns in order to target

anti-poaching operations in the most appropriate areas.

We are also working to restore

more habitat, converting encroached areas and improving drainage so that grassland can establish. We are preparing a booklet on one-horned rhinoceros and supplying information on alternative livelihood options as part of a new awareness drive in other protected areas of Assam such as Kaziranga and Orang Pabitora.

While phase one of our project benefitted around 200 families, we are now working with 300 more. With your support, we continue to develop what we call 'community fencing' – a local culture that opposes poaching operations and will ultimately help establish a viable population of one-horned rhinoceros in Manas tiger reserve.

We have shown that it is possible for the tribal communities of Manas to be sustained on traditional cultural lines while safeguarding the future of rhinos and other elements of biodiversity. For the Bodo people, for the one-horned rhinoceros and for all our children, I hope it will be so.

'Much remains to be done. The five rhino births have been matched by losses to poaching.'

PTES SUPPORTERS ARE RESPONDING BRILLIANTLY TO OUR CAMPAIGN FOR BIG CATS AND WILD DOGS, AND WE ARE NOW FUNDING WORK ON PERSIAN AND SNOW LEOPARDS, CHEETAHS, AFRICAN WILD DOGS, DHOLES, ETHIOPIAN WOLVES AND LIONS. THESE SPECIES ARE OFTEN ECOLOGICAL LYNCHPINS OF ENTIRE LANDSCAPES, BUT THEY SUFFER IN AGE-OLD CONFLICTS BETWEEN HUMANS AND WILDLIFE.

Resolving human-lion conflict in rural African communities

TARANGIRE LION PROJECT

Lions have declined dramatically over the past century due to human population increases and habitat fragmentation, and human-lion conflict has reached unprecedented levels in many rural African ecosystems. These conflicts devastate communities living amongst wildlife. Human-lion conflict in the form of livestock predation contributes to significant economic loss as well as causing injury and loss of human life. People retaliate by killing lions indiscriminately. Such conflicts contribute significantly to the decline of large carnivore populations across Africa.

The Tarangire Lion Project (TLP) in the Maasai steppe of Northern Tanzania is collecting data on the ecology, demography and movement of lions, in addition to information on the impact,

extent and distribution of human-lion conflicts in the region. The project is running a database with information on pride size and composition, births, deaths and health status of the lions as well as the movement by different prides. This is helping us understand the short- and long-term status of lions in this area, and making it possible to quickly identify trends within the local population, and thus to recognise the effects of disease outbreaks or other factors such as drought.

The TLP is also working to understand and improve the ecological and conservation status of Maasai lions, and collaborating with local pastoralist communities to reduce the conflict that naturally occurs when lions attack livestock. We have helped to install more than 188 chain-link security fences around grazing land, helping reduce livestock losses and subsequent retaliatory killing of lions. By monitoring the movement patterns of lions, the TLP has also successfully identified conflict hotspots where livestock are most likely to be attacked, and is using community game scouts to pass this information on to livestock herders so that they can avoid using these high risk areas.



RUAHA CARNIVORES



Amy Dickman, of Oxford University's WildCRU, sends news from the Ruaha Carnivore Project (RCP) in Tanzania. Ruaha is home to 10% of remaining wild lions, about 200 cheetahs, and vital populations of African wild dogs, leopards and spotted hyaenas.

RCP was established in 2009, but new funding from PTES has had dramatic results. Human-carnivore conflict is a major challenge in Ruaha. Traditional hunting by local Barabaig people was a major factor reducing lion numbers. The appointment of five young Barabaig warriors as lion guardians to alert people to lion presence and help repair of livestock enclosures, has transformed attitudes in a community previously resistant to interference from outsiders.

Six Simba Scholarships have been awarded for local children to attend secondary school, demonstrating a tangible benefit linked with the presence of lions. The RCP *Kids 4 Cats* sister school scheme pairs schools in more developed countries with those in villages around Ruaha. PTES has helped identify schools to twin within the UK.

Despite the significance of the landscape, there has been little research on Ruaha's wildlife so the team is working with the Tanzanian authorities and tour operators to collect data on carnivore interactions. 8 027 camera trap images have revealed 43 wild mammal species including 22 carnivores. Future plans include introducing stock guard dogs and a domestic dog vaccination scheme to prevent diseases passing to wild counterparts.

BERNARD KISSUI

JACK GRAY